



News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
<http://fs.usda.gov/mbf>

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Motorized Users Reminded of their Responsibility to Stay On Open Roads/Trails

(Laramie, WY. - September 25, 2013) – With rifle deer and elk seasons opening on October 1, hunters are advised that temporary closures are in effect on Medicine Bow National Forest Roads 553 (north of the community of Lake Creek to Muddy Park) and 588 (east of the community of Lake Creek).

On July 8, 2013 Forest Supervisor Phil Cruz instituted a Forest Order to temporarily close these road segments on the Laramie Ranger District. The purpose of this Order is to protect against further damage to wetland and aquatic resources caused by illegal off-road vehicle use. Until rescinded, the Order prohibits using any type of motor vehicle on or within 200 feet of the restricted roads.

In addition to these closures halting damage to soil, water and vegetation resources, they will also provide Forest officials time to assess potential repair needs and future management options. Depending on the cost of repairs and ability to prevent future illegal damage, options may include permanent or seasonal closure of these road segments.

“Our intent is not to shut the public out from these areas, but to balance a popular public use with the sustainability of these resources,” said Laramie District Ranger Frank Romero. “This is only one of several areas on the Laramie District where we hope to engage the public on their responsibility to be good stewards of the land.”

The Snowy Range is not the only area with this problem. Pole Mountain is another area of concern where the District has increased law enforcement presence to help curb illegal off-road activity. Unfortunately, there has been a recent rash of illegal off-road use near Forest Road 700 (Vedauwoo-Glen Road).

Illegal off-road travel by all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and full-size vehicles alike damages vegetation and causes soil rutting. In addition to these impacts, ruts channel eroded materials into lakes, streams and wetlands, which can also severely affect water quality and fish habitat.

Four-wheel drive and ATV enthusiasts wanting to learn more about what they can do to preserve the privilege of enjoying the many open roads and trails on the Laramie Ranger District should contact Ted Benson or Frank Romero at 745-2300.

Visitors are also reminded to pick up a free Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) that identifies all roads and trails open to wheeled motor vehicles on the Medicine Bow National Forest. These can be picked up at the Laramie Ranger District located at 2468 Jackson Street in West Laramie, or at Forest Service offices in Saratoga and Douglas.

For more information about the Medicine Bow National Forest, go to <http://fs.usda.gov/mbf>. You can also follow us on Twitter, **@MBRNFsTBNG**.

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